REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed and considered the Office Action mailed on August 31, 2006, and the references cited therewith.

Claims 35-50 are pending in the application and stand rejected. Review and reexamination of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the amendments herein.

Claim Amendments

Claim 35 has been amended to recite "[a] method for timing multiple events comprising: providing a clock capable of indicating a current time; receiving a plurality of time durations each having a respective duration; determining an expiration time of each time duration based on a respective received time and said respective duration; determining which expiration time of said time durations is first to occur relative to said current time; establishing a start time based on the current time when said first to occur expiration time is determined; determining a time period based on a difference between said start time and said first to occur expiration time minus an amount of time to send an action signal; providing a timer; timing said time period with said timer; transmitting said action signal corresponding to said time duration having said first to occur expiration time when said time period has expired." Support for this amendment can be found, for example, on page 2, lines 5-21.

> "[A]n overview of a method according to an embodiment of the invention may be helpful. In a method according to an embodiment of the invention, a set of durations may be received. The set of durations includes at least two time durations, and each duration corresponds to a respective action signal to be sent at the end of the respective duration. An expiration time corresponding to each duration may be determined, and the expiration time that is first to occur may be selected. When the selected expiration time occurs, the action signal corresponding to the selected expiration time may be sent. The forgoing procedure may be repeated with the next expiration time(s) until there are no more expiration times to be selected. As a result, a method according to an embodiment of the invention allows for the use of a single timer to time multiple events."

Additional support for this amendment may be found on page 5, lines 13-23 of the specification, which recites:

> "[i]n order to make sure there is time to execute portions of the method, for example sending the call back signal and then sending the action signal at the expiration time, the time period may be made less than the time difference. It is therefore anticipated that the time period may not be equal to the time difference, but instead may be equal to the time difference minus some

amount of time needed to execute portions of the method, such as those portions that occur from the time a call back signal is sent to the time an action signal is sent."

Claims 40 and 45 has been similarly amended. No new matter is believed to have been entered by these amendments.

Claims 36-38, 41-43 and 46-48 have been amended to reflect the amendments to claims 35, 40 and 45, respectively. No new matter is believed to have been entered by these amendments.

Claim 50 has been amended to address a clerical error. No new matter is believed to have been entered by this amendment.

Amendments to claims 39, 44 and 49 are further discussed below. No new matter is believed to have been entered by these amendments.

Drawing Objections

The drawings have been objected to as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. The Applicants draw the Examiner's attention to FIG. 4, reproduced below for the convenience of the Examiner.

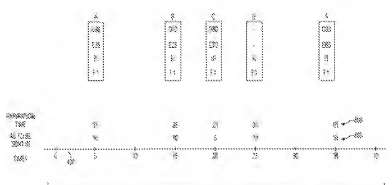

FIG. 4

FIG. 4 is described on page 14 through page 18 of the specification, which recites in part:

"[a]ssuming timing information A is the only piece of timing information pending at time = 5, the expiration time is determined to be time = 35. A start time and time period are selected so that that action signal will be sent at time = 35, and the timer is started.

"At time = 14.9, the timer is still timing the period corresponding to timing information A. Then at time = 15, timing information B is received. The box labeled "B" above time = 15 shows the status of timing information B at time = 15. Timing information B has a duration of 10 time units, an indicator in the "off" state, and a flag in the "active" state. An expiration time corresponding to timing information B is determined to be time 25. The expiration time

corresponding to timing information A (time = 35) is compared to the expiration time corresponding to timing information B (time = 25). Since the expiration time corresponding to timing information B will occur first, a start time and time period are selected so that the action signal corresponding to timing information B will be sent at time = 25, and the timer is started."

The Examiner objects to the following points and the Applicants make the following comments with respect to these points:

- "receiving an additional event having an additional expiration time while said timer is timing said time period" is not illustrated in the Figures – the Applicants respectfully assert that FIG. 4 illustrates that "[a]t time = 14.9, the timer is still timing the period corresponding to timing information A. Then at time = 15, timing information B is received."
- "determining if said additional expiration time will occur sooner than said first to occur expiration time" is not illustrated in the Figures– the Applicants respectfully assert that FIG. 4 illustrates "[t]he expiration time corresponding to timing information A (time = 35) is compared to the expiration time corresponding to timing information B (time = 25)."
- "establishing a new start time based on a current time when said additional expiration time is determined to occur sooner than said first to occur expiration time" is not illustrated in the Figures– the Applicants respectfully assert that FIG. 4 illustrates that "a start time and time period are selected so that the action signal corresponding to timing information B will be sent at time = 25, and the timer is started."

In addition, as can be seen from the above, A, B, and C are a plurality of timing durations. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that FIG. 4 illustrates the claimed subject matter.

Claims Objections

Claims 39, 44, and 49 were objected to because of the following informalities: "said indicator" should be "said first indicator"; "an expiation" should be "a second expiration". Accordingly, the amendments suggested by the Examiner have been made.

35 USC § 112 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 35-37, 40-42, and 45-47 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments herein render the rejection moot.

Claims 35-50 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.

Applicants respectfully request clarification with respect to this rejection. However, as can best be told, it appears that this rejection is based on claims 37, 42 and 47. These claims are generally directed to establishing a new start time based on a current time when said additional expiration time is determined to occur sooner than said first to occur expiration time; determining a new time period based on a time difference between said new start time and said addition expiration time; timing said new time period with said timer; and transmitting an action signal corresponding to said additional event. Support for these claims may be found on page 13, lines 4 through 19 as well as in FIG.4, reproduced below for the convenience of the Examiner.

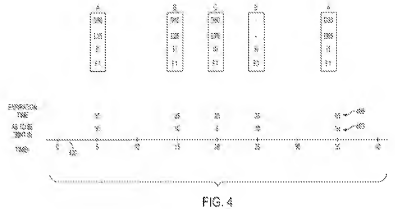

FIG. 4

Figure 4 is described on page 14 through page 18, which recites in part:

> "[a]ssuming timing information A is the only piece of timing information pending at time = 5, the expiration time is determined to be time = 35. A start time and time period are selected so that that action signal will be sent at time = 35, and the timer is started.
>
> "At time = 14.9, the timer is still timing the period corresponding to timing information A. Then at time = 15, timing information B is received. The box labeled "B" above time = 15 shows the status of timing information B at time = 15. Timing information B has a duration of 10 time units, an indicator in the "off" state, and a flag in the "active" state. An expiration time corresponding to timing information B is determined to be time 25. The expiration time corresponding to timing information A (time = 35) is compared to the expiration time corresponding to timing information B (time = 25). Since the expiration time corresponding to timing information B will occur first, a start time and time period are selected so that the action signal corresponding to timing information B will be sent at time = 25, and the timer is started."

As can be seen from the above figure and passage, the specification describes an enabling embodiment of claims 37, 42 and 47.

35 USC §102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 35, 38, 40, 43, 45, 48, and 50 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kinkade et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,360,329).

As an initial matter, Kinkade '329 was issued on March 19, 2002, the present application was filed on April 13, 2001. Accordingly, the '329 patent does not qualify as §102(b) reference, but would rather qualify as a §102(e) reference.

Kinkade does not teach or suggest all of the elements of the presently claimed invention. More specifically, Kinkade does not appear to teach or suggest determining a time period based

on a difference between said time and said first to occur expiration time minus an amount of time to send an action signal. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully assert that the currently presented claims define over the reference cited.

35 USC §103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 36-37, 41-42, and 46-47 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinkade et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,360,329) and further in view of Cave (U.S. Patent No. 6,232,808). In addition, claims 39, 44, and 49 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinkade et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,360,329) and further in view of Cave (U.S. Patent No. 6,314,524). The Applicants respectfully assert that the presently claimed subject matter is not taught or suggested by Kinkade in further view of Cave. More specifically, as the subject matter of claims 36-37, 41-42 and 46-47 incorporate the subject matter of independent claims 35, 40 and 45 respectively, it is respectfully asserted that the claims define over the recited art.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' attorney (603-668-6560) to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-2121.

Respectfully submitted,

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